



WORDEATER

Wordeater exists as a forum of creative expression for the Joliet Junior College community, including students, alumni, faculty, and staff. It celebrates the diversity of ideas, beliefs, values, language, media, and people of its community. It seeks to promote artistic, personal, and political expression, democratic values, and social justice, including fairness and equal opportunity, rights, and access. Wordeater rejects censorship and attempts to reflect the artistry and lives of its community, while embracing JJC's Core Values of respect, integrity, collaboration, humor and well-being, innovation, and quality.

Wordeater #127 & Fall '12 E-Zine

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What You're Supposed to do at School

Sam T. Jensen

1. Show up.
2. Wear pants.
3. Bring books to class, not a backpack full of bullfrogs.
4. Eat lunch in the cafeteria, not in a bathroom stall that you wrote 'cool kids table' on the door of.
5. Not ride a scooter in the hallways.
6. Make friends, not enemies for life.
7. Test pens on notebook paper, not the teacher's forehead.
8. Write 'Danny Spalding kisses boys' on the bathroom mirror. No, wait, don't do that. Unless you can back it up.
9. Read poems to the class, not a list of grievances you have with the teacher.
10. Pay attention or something.



A student's job
Angel Formenti

Story Telling

Denisse Martinez

Write me a story- he said.
Read me a poem- was uttered again.
An escape from reality,
A break from humanity
Late at night, and into the phone,
Tell me something I don't know.
Blur the lines from fact to fiction.
Save me from the world
Of bitter, cold hearted people,
Of materialistic egotism.
& I'll scramble my brain for plots,
As if my words could save you,
As if my written verse, inspire you.
But if the case was thus,
I'd tell the whole world about you,
I'd chronicle the story of us.
As a chapter in a great myth
Of a life so well played out,
Of every dream you've dreamed about.
If I could control fate,
I'd spin its web in lovely ways
Of chaotic, lively and intricate plays.
I'd wrap it in ribbon and sign my name.
I'd let you read it all,
Take a glimpse at my fantasy world.
Then set it all in smoke and flames
Free each and every one of us.
Enough to make our own mistakes,
To tell you to write your own story,
To find your own escape.

Changeling

Kara Ponce

I wish I could disappear into the woods
Never caring to look back
Back upon the flash and bang of modernization
the squared garishness absent of the organic

Disenchanted with the world of iron and ore
of frosty steel that bites at my flesh
the salt and pepper blandness of boxed existences
the static uniformity of so much noise
droning bees in hive boxes
pouring so much sickly sweet honey
that rots at the teeth of the woodland bear
I have seen the elephant—
grey and cumbersome, looming and desolate as the polluted skies,
it has laid its trunk upon my head
and in my heart I felt the sentence of death.

how we wither in the foundering darkness
beneath our Babel towers
breathing smog
and downing Rasputin's brew
Wolves, disingenuously naked before sheep
cannibals, the lot!
could even God save such sinners?
It's all just noise and noise and noise
sound reverberating within hollow speakers
inert in its forward motion,
perishing among or persecuting
all that is organic and aerodynamic
its hands have pulled the songbirds out of the sky
and stuffed them into the mouths of the lions
eager for the melodies to shatter against the tainted nobility
found in the death of light and fire
and time traversing telescopes
Perhaps I could escape it for a while
by fleeing into the woods—
best I perish among the thickets and wood nymphs,
a stranger in my own home,
than wane amongst the boxed-in, beeswax monsters.

Rebirth

Lauren Kruis

I travel through the forest
Alone
To the shore
Where I was made
A monster
Born in blood
Given life
Beneath the pines
Near the stagnant water
I allow myself to weep
Disrupting its stillness
Blurring and distorting
Everything in between
It is here
That clarity is found
Within the chaos
Making my final act
One of permanence
Returning the beast
From whence
It came

Roots

Tracy Klag



Wonderful

Cody Marcukaitis

You should tell me I'm wonderful, because I am.

The greatest of fools could see that.

I am like Oz, the great and powerful.

Like Marilyn who told the rest of the world to fuck off
if they couldn't deal with her at her worst.

They were wonderful and so am I...

+++

Don't bother asking why, there isn't a reason nor rhyme
to my madness.

Like the Doctor of Lunacy, or The father of Wonderland,
which coincidentally is my birthplace.

They spun their mind's strange tasting nectar onto the world's canvas.
painting a trippy picture, that smelled so good.

They were wonderful and so am I...

+++

Were all wonderful, but not like me

You couldn't be or you'd not be you...
...you'd be I

Then who does that leave I to be ...
You?...hardly

You're nothing like Old Blue Eyes
who told me the best is yet to come

Or The French Chef herself...
who told me the only time to eat diet food is when you're waiting
for steak to cook.

They were deliciously wonderful and so am I...

+++

One cannot begin to imagine the immensity of the
wonderful coursing through my veins...

It's like liquid sex pumping in and out
and in and out
and in and out again.

Like my celebrity Aphrodite Elizabeth Hurley
the hottest 47 year old the universe has ever had the privilege to look upon
The number one on that list...
you know the list...
every guy's made the fucking fuck list
and she is A number fuck 1

She is fuck-tastically wonderful and so am I...

† † †

I am so fuck-rifically wonderful women, rather love...eludes me

They see my wonderful as intimidating,
as an unattainable goal that no one shy of
Elizabeth Hurley-ness could ever hope to achieve.

My figure is such
because of the overwhelming amounts of wonderful that
resides within me

For no other container on Earth could possibly wield
the pure funny
raw musical punny
thriving magical sunny
throbbing shining delicious
living singing fictitious
giving atrocious

WONDERFUL THAT IS ME!

...it is a curse, as well as a blessing
 ...I know that I am wonderful, but I must remain alone
 ...such as many who are wonderful
 ...such as the Opera Ghost
 ...such is our shared fates

...wonderful and alone

It's wonderful and so am I...

+++

But its not all so bad...

I will join those among the wonderful in this world
and one day someone, somewhere will take notice

And we will gather in the sky, all of us who are alike in wonderful

For I am like:

Nathan Lane

Beethoven and Mozart

Walt Disney and Pixar

Stan Lee

Captain Barbosa biting into an apple

Elizabeth Taylor and Paul Newman on a Hot Tin Roof

Webber Sondheim Bernstein and Menken

Sheldon Cooper

Stewie Griffin back in 1999

Dumbledore and King George V

Mangeto and Gandalf

Count Dooku and Count Dracula

Danny Elfman'

Michael Caine

The 2 maids in The Help

Lewis Black

Forest Gump

John Candy and Steve Martin in a Plane Train or Automobile

Clark W. Griswold

Emma Stone

Dick Van Dyke

V conducting Tchaikovsky over an exploding London

Dexter the serial killer as well as the cartoon genius

Julie Andrews hovering on an umbrella

Whoever it was that wrote Hamlet

Batman

Kermit

Neo

As well as both Boondock Saints

MIKA and Grace Kelly sucking too hard on a lollipop

Bond James Bond

Lady Gaga and Bach

Vivaldi and Elvis

Wall-E

Dory

Woody

Remy

Mr. Fredrickson

And Michael Wazowski

Mrs. Doubtfire

The Mad Hatter

Dr. Pepper
Dr. Seuss
Dr. Jekyll
Dr. Manhattan
Dr. Cunningham, I just made him up
Prof. Moriarty
Prof. Van Helsing
Prof. Lupin
Prof. Xavier
Prof. Underwood, she's real
Holmes and Watson
Spongebob and Patrick
Fred and Ginger
Bialystock and Bloom
Meryll Fucking Streep
Barnabus Collins
Harold Zidler
The Emcee
and the Narrator

And at the head of this glorious table is He,
sitting on his rightful golden throne...

...Mel Brooks proclaiming ITS GOOD TO BE THE KING!!!

They are all wonderful...
...and so am I

They just don't know it yet

I'm up Fret
Angel
Formenti



About a Girl

Kristen Kemp

In a book
In a box
On a shelf
Way up high
In a room
Which is locked
Sit's a secret
About a girl
Who has no name

This girl used to collect bees
And radiate light
Read stories of Wonderlands
Pretended to skip roads of yellow brick

But how could a girl such as this have a secret

She found solace under blue plaid printed skirts
And board games
She had reasons to fear darkness
She knew there were no such places as Wonderlands
And yellow brick roads don't lead you anywhere

Are these the secrets contained in this book
In the Box
On the shelf
High up
In the room
Which is locked

The Secret is....None of these you see.
But it is.
And

Ever shall be

UNTOLD.

Dream

Danielle Clements

Drowsy eyes close and
Reality fades to black.
Effortlessly, I fly away.
Anything is possible in
My virtual escape.



Fall Calls

Linda Steger

25-Candy

Cody Marcukaitis

Down in the city in the candy shop,
there's a girl made of sugar cane and lemon drops.

She's a sweet sprinkled cupcake with a skittle in her eye.
If you ask you'll get a slice of her cherry pie.

You can see her hang and swing on a candy cane.
Give her caramels she'll feed you saccharine champagne.

All the boys run on down just to see her dance.
Stuffing all their pocket change down into her pants.

Smooth creamy coating with a cotton candy skin.
They're dippin' all their twizzlers in her chocolate sin.

Pretty little sweeting, she knew from the start,
using her ripe jawbreaker to take from the heart.

You can get belly ache from too many sweets
Cavity in your soul from all of those treats.

She thought she was safe in her bubble gum world,
who knew that your life could get all sour and curled.

She's sucking too hard on her lollipop,
she wants to be rid of the candy shop.



Jude and Lucy
Heather Smith

Perchance to Dream

Christina Renee

I don't want to sleep
Perchance to dream
For fear all I will see
Is the trouble all around me

Divorce, of course
And lies and tears
Nasty words and
Drowning fears

Feeling alone
And scared tonight
After having a subtle
Yet heart wrenching fight

We're supposed to be together
But we're really far apart
Always arguing
Never speaking from the heart

Going to sleep
Perchance to dream
"Lord, comfort me.
And keep me please."



Majesty Rising **Cathy Stygar**

Expectations

LaKeisha Stigall

I won't be your Barbie Doll with board straight hair and plastic skin
I won't be your Barbie Doll with an impossible waistline and painted on grin
I won't be your Barbie Doll with a dream house and pink corvette
I won't be your Barbie Doll, flawless and never upset

Instead I'll be....imperfect

I won't be your Barbie Doll, smooth ivory and blonde
I won't be your Barbie Doll, listening and never respond
I won't be your Barbie Doll to dress up and control
I won't be your Barbie Doll, empty plastic, hollow soul

Instead I'll be...Imperfect

I won't be your Barbie Doll, fun to pass around
I won't be your Barbie Doll, to drop on the ground
I won't be your Barbie Doll, to hide away when you're bored
I won't be your Barbie Doll, so easily restored

Instead I will be....IMPERFECT

I will be me
I will be free
I will be loud
I will be proud
I will be wrong
I will be strong

I will be exactly what I need to be...

You will not be my Ken Doll, just good looks and no brain
You will not be my Ken Doll, boring and vain
You will not be my Ken Doll, with your girls here and there
You will not be my Ken Doll, showing off everywhere

You will be...nothing

You will not be my Ken Doll, with your expensive toys
You will not be my Ken Doll, with demeanor and poise
You will not be my Ken Doll, slicked back hair and smooth styles
You will not be my Ken Doll, loving expressions but fake smiles

You will be....Nothing

Nothing but a liar
Nothing I desire
Nothing to miss
Nothing to kiss
Nothing to see
Nothing to me

NOTHING worth my time....

I will not be your Barbie and you will not be my Ken
and we will not play your games and this silly pretend...

Expectations are a bitch...

Crimson & Clovers

Sam T. Jensen

From the time she was five to when she turned eighteen, Vivian West practically raised herself. Without her parents in the picture, she gained insight from books, television, the internet, and through her own artwork. But Vivian never painted anything real. She didn't want her paintings to be something people could see just by walking outside. Of course, she got a lot of criticism for this when she eventually started making a name for herself as an artist. Her story was inspirational; therefore, she was invited to several art shows, and had her work showcased at her high school. Yet she still received more harsh words than positive ones.

Vivian decided it would be best to stop drawing things she had always drawn and try a more traditional approach. Since she had taught herself, she didn't know any other way of doing things. So Vivian signed up for an art class at her local community college. She seemed confused by the simple ideas being taught but kept on drawing and painting things until they looked well enough for her teacher to accept. One day, Vivian was struggling so massively, not being able to be as creative as she wanted, she didn't even want to continue. She drew a picture hanging herself to show how fed up she was, which got a laugh from the creepy Jewish boy who sat next to her.

"Why are you making this so difficult?" her teacher stammered. "I don't know!" screamed Vivian, in a rare confrontational tone. Her teacher walked away in a huff and Vivian threw her notepad on her desk. She glanced at the clock and decided it was time to leave. The teacher was standing by the exit so she had to improvise a way out. She noticed a back door to the art room that she had never seen before. She immediately packed her bag and sprinted for it. She opened the door and found herself in a dark closet.

She reached for a light switch after losing sight of the door, and turned on the light, but the room remained pitch black. After walking around a while she began to realize the closet was

actually a much larger room. "I didn't know there was a dark room here!" Vivian whispered to herself excitedly. She took out her cell phone to try and see where the room was leading and everything was blurry. She wiped her glasses on her sweater to see if that would improve her sight. It did not. She squinted as hard as she could but could only make out a wall with a small door on it.

Being the adventurous type, Vivian crept down smaller than a house cat and entered the door. She was outside. But she wasn't outside of the school. She panicked when the door behind her disappeared. The sky that was blue five minutes ago was suddenly a dark gray. The grass was gone and there was nothing more than a desert soil covering the ground. Everything was still a blur and Vivian tried to wipe her glasses again. But when she removed them she could see perfectly. It was as if she had entered someplace that was completely covered in her glasses prescription.

She managed to pull a half-smirk at the fact she was seeing perfect without her glasses for the first time in over ten years. But that didn't solve the fact she was still confused about where she was. Vivian started walking towards what she thought was civilization. It looked like an old west town but was covered in moss and spider eggs – similar to her painting "Ghost Town". As she got closer, she realized it was an exact replica of the town she created in her head a year and a half ago. "Oh no," she thought as she remembered what else was in that painting. As she made her final step to the border of the town, four shadow-like figures appeared in front of her.

They were all over seven feet tall, as Vivian never liked drawing to scale. One removed a silhouette of a cowboy hat to greet her to the town. Frightened and confused, Vivian curtseyed. The figures had no mouths, therefore they could not talk. But it was clear they wanted her to stay. As she explored more of the town she saw a person around her age slumped next to a rock. "You're bleeding," Vivian exclaimed as she noticed a teardrop of blood on the person's face. She leaned to wipe it when the person turned to her. It was a boy. Not *any* boy, but "The Perfect Boy," the first painting she ever did when she was

only six years old.

Vivian had been teased in elementary school for her bizarre interests, so she drew a picture of someone she wanted in her life - a perfect boy. He was always nice to her, called her sweet names, and never thought less of her. Vivian smiled ear to ear when she was able to recognize his flawless appearance. "You," Perfect Boy said in a hushed tone. "You!" Perfect Boy got to his feet, wiped the blood from his face with his tattered blue and orange striped shirt, and spit on Vivian. "What, though!?" Vivian responded in shock. "You put me here! You made me! You made all of this!" Vivian was confused why Perfect Boy was upset. She had just begun to pick up the pieces herself.

"You are the reason I am miserable," Perfect Boy explained, "You drew me, then I was here. I loved it here! I was all alone, happy, the sun was shining – while wearing sunglasses, which I never understood, but it was still fun! Then the sky faded to gray. The grass disappeared. I started outgrowing my clothes – my only pair, I should add. Blue and orange were my favorite colors; I don't even like them anymore! I want pink! You never draw pink! So, a town went up, which I thought, 'oh, okay, great, people,' but nooooooo! I was ten, Vivian. I saw a house, I went in. Apple pie? Cookies? Grandma? Nope! Scary three-head cats and June Cleaver in a gas mask! You're lucky, you know. You don't have to live here. I have to live here every second of my life. And who knows how long that will be? There's a Korean War vet with no eyeballs up the road who's at least ninety-five."

Vivian began to cry. Perfect Boy comforted her and apologized for yelling. "It's just sad," he explained in a calmer tone. "I'm stuck." "Well so am I!" Vivian quickly retaliated. "I don't want to be here either. I didn't even know this existed. It's my messed up head that you get to deal with all the time. It can't be fun, I know." Perfect Boy wiped Vivian's tears with his warm, gentle hands. When Vivian looked into Perfect Boy's eyes, she saw hope. She saw someone who knew they were meant to be greater. Before she could say anything, he muttered "Parents." "What?" Vivian asked. "Parents would have been nice – a mom, a dad. I don't know what's so perfect about me. I'm still afraid of the giant spiders in town hall."

Vivian realized there was more in common with her and the Perfect Boy than she thought. She smiled, got up, and asked to see the spiders. Perfect Boy hesitantly agreed. They walked to the large grim-looking town hall, which was actually a prison Vivian had sketched when she was in sixth grade. Perfect Boy gripped Vivian's hand tightly as they walked inside. It was a lot darker than Vivian had remembered. All they could hear were multiple footsteps in the distance. "These guys are tough, Viv," Perfect Boy announced, "They've got eight legs, you know." "I know," Vivian muttered, "I drew them. But don't worry, I'm a scrapper." The footsteps grew closer as Perfect Boy's grip grew tighter.

Large purple eyes sat on top of a five foot spider. His midsection was the size of a small bear. He had a menacing grin with teeth sharper than a butcher's knife. His gray, ashy lips salivated at the sight of a new friend. Each leg looked powerful enough to turn over a semi-truck. Without a moment of hesitation, Vivian ruffled the enormous spider on the head and starting calling it pet names. The spider rolled on his back like a dog and starting panting. Thinking nothing bad would happen, Perfect Boy soon joined in.

Then an even larger set of eyes appeared on a spider at least twice the size. One of the eyes had been struck with a tree branch, as there was still a small twig near the pupil. "Oh, you're hurt!" Vivian eagerly spoke as she signaled the creature to bend down so she can help him. "I'm fine," the spider responded. "The tree people and I were just having a laugh. Who are you?" Vivian, astonished her middle school art project was talking to her, slowly stated "I'm Vivian." "You!" The spider quickly changed his tone. "You're the reason we live like this!" "We've been over this," Perfect Boy attempted to explain. Vivian pleaded with the spider not to be upset and said that she just wanted to leave. The spider refused to let her go and demanded she be locked in jail for eternity.

Perfect Boy and Vivian were escorted to a small jail cell, where the bones of many people Vivian had drawn were scattered on the floor like popcorn at a movie theatre. Vivian cried again. Perfect Boy was exhausted from yelling at the

spiders to let him go. The couple leaned against the cold steel bars and awaited their fate. Vivian stared at the ground. It was filled with the dried bodies of female scale insects – her favorite thing to draw in her 8th grade Biology class. The color reminded her of a sweater her mom used to wear. She was brought back to a time when she was a child, running through her big backyard being chased by her dog, Bingo, and looking for four-leaf clovers to give to her mom. Vivian held that memory until her tears stopped and she fell asleep. She was woken up by a man with a pumpkin head tapping her indigo boots.

It was Jack the Ripper-O'Lantern, a piece that no one seemed to get the point of at an art show in Chicago the year before. Jack informed the couple they were being hanged. "What?! That can't happen! I don't belong here! I can make it better! I'm trying! I promise!" Vivian screeched at the top of her lungs. "Too late, kid." Jack coyly remarked. Perfect Boy was oddly content as he was led up to the hanging post. "You get used to these sorts of things happening," he explained, "It's almost a relief." Vivian, swallowing her tears, stepped next to Perfect Boy. She couldn't even make out any words to murmur.

The Blue Cyclops that Vivian drew on the back of a History quiz was waiting for the okay to let the two of them go. Vivian looked down in a moment of desperation and saw white. She glanced at Perfect Boy's feet and saw black. This did not match the terrain, or anything she had drawn in the past. She had a faint idea of what the colors meant but did not want to say anything. A crowd of art stared menacingly at their creator. Vivian looked at Perfect Boy and mouthed the words "swing to me". Perfect Boy acted confused. Before she got to repeat herself she was whisked off of the floor she was standing on and fell into a white hole.

Covered in dust, surrounded by darkness, Vivian patted herself down. She walked until she saw a light. All Vivian saw was a blur next to the light that looked like a shadow of a ghoulish figure. She reached in her pocket and put her glasses back on. Her art teacher was holding the door open to the supply closet. "What were you doing in there?" he asked, puzzled. "Art," she replied. She pushed her teacher out of the way and stumbled

to her desk, as her class stared in disbelief. She picked up her notepad to begin drawing and saw the doodle she had shown the Jewish boy had vanished. There was only a noose and a black hole.

A light bulb went off in Vivian's head as she rushed to her white Volvo and gunned it home like she's never gunned it before in her life. She squealed to a stop in front of her one-bedroom townhouse and rushed inside. Knocking over boxes and cats, she grabbed a single green folder marked 'Vivian West, Kindergarten'. She threw assignments in the air like confetti until she saw the paper marked "The Perfect Boy". There was the sun, with his Ray-Ban sunglasses, green grass blowing in the wind on a crystal blue sky, but no Perfect Boy – only an outline of the drawing she made so many years ago.

She picked up the drawing, held it to the light to get a better view and studied the perfect cut-out made in the center of the paper. Then a face slowly started to appear. It began as a blur but quickly made its way to being as clear as her own face. She instantly recognized the face as it was her own creation – the eyes, the hair, the smile – it triggered an emotion she had never felt before. She began to cry a different type of tear as she saw his torso appear – his shirt was in impeccable condition: not a wrinkle, a rip, or a stain. "Hi," they said in unison. She ran towards him and gave him a giant hug.

"Perfect Boy" won the Prairie State Art Competition that year. Judges said they've never seen anything so complex, yet so simple. Vivian saw that the Perfect Boy could be anyone. You can put a piece of paper in front of anything and make it perfect for you. No one should be trapped in their own world thinking everything is great. Perfection exists in everyone; sometimes it just takes a powerful journey to get it out. Or scissors.

Consumed

Kristen Kemp

Dormant and still he lies in silent slumber
It, a creature of habit, only rises when
The moon is high
And my river turns red
That is when my beast awakens
It follows me through the thick
Brush of my forest
Barefoot and broken I travel through this forest of broken glass
And lost souls

It comes to me on this night
A predator aroused by his prey
Taken by its power
The beast sweeps me up into its arms
Under Joshua's Tree

Drawing me close he whispers
"Foolish girl forfeit yourself to me"
"I will have my way with you, don't bother to resist."
So I give myself to this beast
To the river of red we will go
And there the beast consumes me

Fade

Lauren Kruis

Knuckles raw

From fighting shadows

Retreating into cement walls

I want to fade away with them

Melt into eternity alone

Where no one may wander

Or wonder

Where I've gone

Skulliosis

Jason Gruzlewski



Mother-Fucking Ted

Andy Ludolph

"Mother-Fucking Ted!"

The heroic group, the dazzling champions of some hard to pronounce world, the saviors of a far-off nation in peril... sat there. They lay lazily, drumming fingers on hard table tops, chewing on pens and tapping their feet on the cold cement floor. Their heads jolted up at the sound of a growl; excitement faded when it wasn't the ferocious beast they had hoped to slay, but someone's gurgling stomach.

"Fuck it, Ted," Lou, the Halfling wonder thief and divine keeper of the basement, grumbled. "He said he'd bring food. I'm starving!"

"Yeah, well, leave it to Ted to be three hours late," Derek, mysterious ranger, moaned.

"Probably picking up some bitch in Canada for all we know," Matthew, all powerful dungeon-master, snapped, "It wouldn't bother me so much if he didn't have our fucking books. I'd gladly continue without him, trust me, I would, but we can't play without the books!"

The group groaned in frustration, sinking like weights in the sand of the couches and cushions. Bill, the lovably oafish barbarian, had his head resting on the table. Rick, the compulsive litterer of a druid, chewed on his fingernails. In all truth the group would get much farther without Ted, both in game and out. On the table of life, he was the short leg that made it wobbly. When they were ready to begin their session, he was off doing errands for some girl. The group could understand the pursuit of a romantic encounter; they all practiced so hard at their swordplay that the idea of an actual battle sent their blood rushing. But the fact that he would go bolting out as soon as she called, to carry her purchases, to drive her state to state, to spend all of his money...and for what gain? What reward would he receive at the end of his adventures? A front row seat to watch her boyfriend slide his wriggling, slimy tongue down her throat.

Sadly, that wasn't even the worst of it. When they were in

battle, he was the one who'd nearly fry all of his teammates with a spell because he was so anxious to try that puppy out, it didn't occur to him to take a few steps away from his fellow crusaders. The group didn't deny his heart of purity, they just agreed unanimously that his head was too dense and his other head was too light a sleeper.

Lou, lying on the pile of mattresses like the lioness she felt she was, chuckled: "Sounds like we need to reintroduce Ted to 'Donkey-Man'."

The rest of the group found themselves tittering at the nostalgic punishment. The last time they had unveiled Donkey-Man was the last time Ted had screwed up so badly that it left the group face-to-face with death. He meant well, but of course he didn't talk to the group, and instead of listening to what plan they had thought, went darting ahead and set off all of the traps. He was fine, of course, only to look back at his party. They looked like porcupines with all of the arrows and darts that pierced through their skin. As they plucked out the arrows they concocted a plan under ol' Ted's nose; a plan involving a strong love potion, a locked room, and a man they called 'Donkey Man'. All of the attributes of a regular human, but all donkey from the waist down and dragging on the floor. The description of all 7 days Ted and Donkey-Man spent together was so intense, Ted blacked out on the floor.

Matthew shook his head as he pulled out a cigarette; no, this deserves so much more punishment than just donkey man. So many more D4s, no, make those D12s, of rectal damage needed to be involved. The group chortled and hooted as they all began to throw in their ideas to the revenge plot so wicked.

Matthew, merciless as ever, suggested something bigger, something pointier and sharper. Bill got excited, hoping that meant he got to use his new battle axe. Derek sneered as he stroked his bow, suggesting with just a pinch of magic, his arrows could turn most unkind. Bill then suggested a punch to the face. Rick, being as in tune with nature as any druid should be, asked not for violence. Instead, he plead for the chance to use Ted to feed his wolves. Leave it to Rick, always thinking of animals first.

As the self-declared and group-agreed master of mischief, Lou's mind began whirring as fast and furious as her tongue. They needed to trick Ted, she pointed out, that being tricked and humiliated was much better than a random blow to the face. They needed to use his ultimate weakness: Ale. He can't stop drinking, and it only takes about two pints to make him agreeable.

The group roared in a frenzy of laughter as the tone shifted darker. Each member quickly shot out an idea to further Ted's humiliation and/or demise. Something with piss, something with nudity, something with thorny brambles, something with poison, something with lust, something involving those bastard children he spawned, something with fangs, something with horns, something with strength, something with force, something that will leave him vomitting in pain for days!

Then, it came to them. A revenge plot so vile against Dear Ted was at last in agreement. They all grinned sinister Cheshire grins as they thought of how hilariously delicious this payback would be. Their lungs were ready to wither from the lack of oxygen from all their laughter. How wonderful, they agreed, that Ted would be greeted with a vengeance so brutish that-

The door opened. Ted stood at the doorway, nothing but a bucket of chicken at hand. He had the same dopey smile as always. He said 'hi' and sat with the now silent group. The clocked ticked away as they all stared at him with dead, vacant eyes. Ted cleared his throat and gave a shy chuckle.

"...Did you bring the books?" Derek asked.

"No," Ted replied with a tone of guilt. He then gave a smile as he placed the fried poultry on the table. "But I brought chicken!"

The group remained silent, examining Ted with hungry, restless eyes of wolves. They were ready to pounce on him and declare their victory once and for all. They had it all worked out to perfection. The silence hung heavily in the air as they made their move. Each one ravenously sunk their teeth into the chicken. Not a word was said.

Depression

Anthony Reitz

Ah, my old friend
It's been quite awhile
I've fallen in love since we've last shared company
I've fallen out of love
Then, I was swept from my feet
Landing ever so gracefully in her embrace
Old friend, I will admit,
I missed you long ago
You gave me a cane to walk
A reason to write
But I turned my back to you
Cancerous fiend, you stole from me!
You have always been my shadow
But she was the sun that cast no such atrocities
Everything is cold now, old friend
But I never asked for you to warm me



Something New Cory Bush



Jo Titulli
McKinley
Morganfield

It's a Secret

Anthony Reitz

It's dark and lonely here, my dear
So, would you be so kind to shut the door behind you?
I'm sorry for the mess
These old mossy stones and their cracking mortar
It's the water that covers them I tell you
It's all the damn water!
I've told the landlord,
It seems they care not
I've tried yelling and screaming
I've tried self-harm
I've even tried removing myself from occupancy
But you see, my dear
I cannot go
For, I am the creak in your house as you lay to sleep
I'm those fantastical nightmarish images that pour through your head
I'm the sadistic smile in the dark
I'm those footsteps you hear behind you when you're alone
Yes, I move without a sound, my dear
Close the door behind you I said
Do you see me now?
I tried warning you, you know
I'll be here haunting you now, the rest of your days
Because I'm your dirty little secret
And I'm
Not
LEAVING

Untitled

Angela Catoire

Her flight is more gracious than the drops of dew,
that sleep upon the still petals of vibrant flowers.

She glistens and sings songs of nature,
that are too beautiful to comprehend.

She's free, so she flies with patience,
and her eyes hold understanding intertwined with wisdom
because there isn't a single place she hasn't seen.

Much like the perfect sunset over your favorite lake,
you reach out to touch,
but find that the only way to feel somewhat close
is to jump in the reflection and let it engulf you.

I know I can't be that bird,
and I certainly can not touch it,
but no one will stop me from living in it's reflection,
humming my own perfect songs through each day.

If only I could grow wings,
I too,

would fly away.



the ride of life Angel Formenti

We're All Gon' Struggle Sometimes, We're All Gon' Cry Sometimes

Lanell Ray

The pain...yeah it runs deep...
I haven't been getting that much sleep...
Sometimes I wonder...
Do my loved ones really love me?
Been paralyzed for eleven years...
Accepted it with no tears...
Coming out that windshield, flipping like a windmill...
Everything was all good, just the other day ago...
Then my own cousin's kids looked at me like I'ma scary ghost...
Nothing that they did...give em' time...all they need is growth...
I'm sad nd' I'm mad at my cousin Tony's funeral...
Grandfather passed...that made me madder even more...
I got an auntie and an uncle inhaling crack smoke...
There's nowhere to turn.... I sure don't see a back door...
Project Knights on the rise...
Regardless if they criticize...
I got my eyes open wide...
Cuz' this world is full of jive...
My girlfriend's cousin Bobby committed suicide...
Lord is the Enterprise...
Beam me up when it's my time to rise...
Never saw my Grandmother...
She died when my mom was fourteen...
Mrs. Frances Willis.....

CHELSEA NIGHT

danielbecerra

forget the muted spasm in your belly
and for a moment think;
there's something about the length,
the dull physique,
of these frozen last two weeks
the minutes and the days
the ends of which
will likely never meet.
They caress my nerves
like trailing razor blades
over my skinned knees.
in between they intertwine, though
to kiss and bruise
and drown in icy depths
of a dirty kitchen sink
"you haven't bled thus far
and i don't intend
to make you bleed."
in this hollow state
i recall the lesser hand that reached
toward the calcifying stain
hidden in the darkened city streets
the filthy mark that formed
Our Lady of the Underpass
sweet Mary of the beaten down,
backdoor lover of the weak.
i asked too much of nothing then
as one does when in desperate need;
love me with your frozen air
hold me like you do the rest
with numbing comfort
bless me with intangibles,
droplets and deceit.
please,
something reminiscent of vapor,

darkness,
the coughing in between
(a slow collective exhale,
and then nothing).
but forget the muffled moaning in your head
and for a moment think;
sweet mother of the hopeless,
in sickness i created you
in sickness i will make you leave
for there's something 'bout this handful
that is sure to cease
this broken life,
these frozen city dreams.



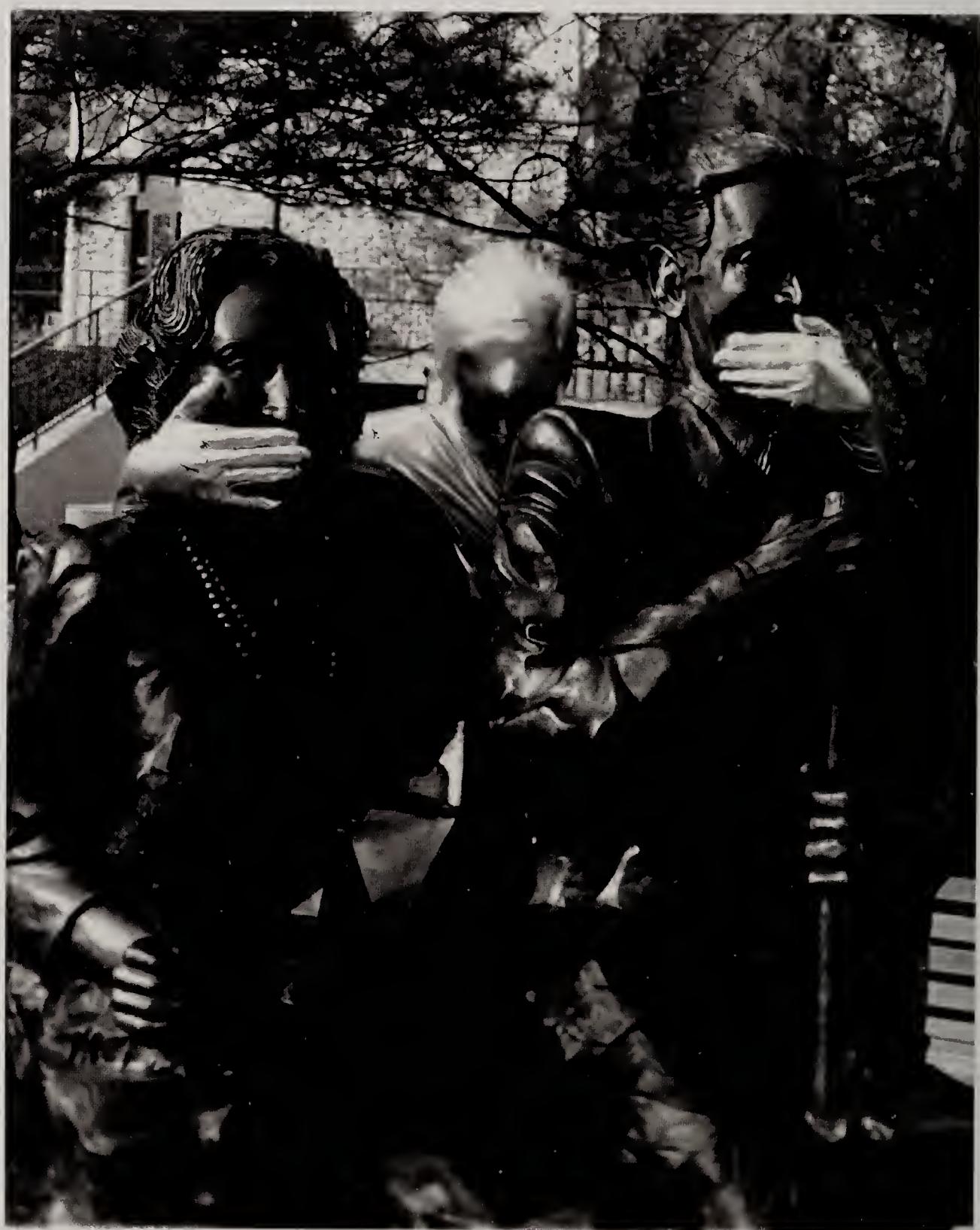
Sin City LaKeshia Stigall

I's with no Love

Luis Saucedo

lies that lie, in
lasciviously lust, in
lips of lime luster,
ceLestiaL ears listen!

lingerie
late'en day
allured eyes pray
lamenting I leer and lay



Speak No Evil Heather Smith

For the Peaceful Order of Ignorance

Adam J. Heidenreich

Peace is when
the lamb lies down for the knife
the teacher sees no hands raised
citizens just follow orders
and we wait while money talks

Peace is when
the teacher sees no hands raised
we are silent soaked sponges
and we wait while money talks
the universe lacks questions

Peace is when
we are silent soaked sponges
here exists no debate
the universe lacks questions
we are "just being polite"

Peace is when
here exists no debate
leaving elephants in the room
we are "just being polite"
no contact with the truth

Peace is when
leaving elephants in the room
we walk alone and avert eyes
no contact with the truth
we hear only melody

Peace is when
we walk alone and avert eyes
lying through our omissions
we hear only melody
avoiding the dissonance

Peace is when
lying through our omissions
- this is not actual peace -
avoiding the dissonance
this is just an illusion

Peace is when
- this is not actual peace -
an aversion to weapons
this is just an illusion
the lamb lies down for the knife

The Bangles on the Street

Fakhra Rasheed

A hypnotizing call from the streets is attractive to young girls. This is a call for bangles given by Malaika, a Bangle sales lady. She visits the village several times during the year from an unknown place. The young girls view her as a fairy who brings the gift of colorful bangles. She is the only lady who sold the bangles in the village; young girls are attracted to her because of her colorful garments. She wears a lengha (Pakistani Skirt) and bright colors mostly in red; her arms are always full with bangles. She wears big ear rings and huge nose pins which is not customary in Punjab's culture. As she enters the street, the sound of her Piles (anklet) tells young girls that she has arrived.

As she moves down the street young girls open their front doors and it develops a sense of joy and excitement. As some look for their scarf and shoes, others tell their friends that the Bangles lady is on their street. Little girls run behind her like colorful butterflies around flowers. The girls follow her until she decides to open her bangle basket. Finally, she sits on the corner of a street and opens the basket with a smile on her face as she describes in great detail why those bangles are worthy, and she convinces the young girls to fill their arms with them. As the girls buy the bangles, they ask her, as usual, "Where do you live?" Sometimes she ignores the question with a smile and sometimes she tells them, "I'm an angel and God sent these bangles for you."

One hot summer afternoon, elementary school girls were waiting for their parents to pick them up. Suddenly, they saw a wagon was coming and there was a familiar big basket and a red cloth was coming out of the basket. One of them said, "I think it's Malika the bangle lady." Some agreed and some did not. If it's her, it's certain that they will find the answer where she lives. As the slow old wagon neared, the curiosity of knowing the secret was mounting.

The wagon was coming close to the school and suddenly it started to shake in a weird manner. As it drew near to school one

of the tires came out and the small wagon hit the oncoming bus. The basket with red cloth opened up and there were bangles in red, green, yellow and golden. The girls shouted to Malika and ran to see if was her. There were a lot of people around the wagon and they were not letting the young girls see. Finally, one of them cried out, "It's Malika! It's her shoe." Suddenly, the young girls became sad. They were surrounded by hundreds of beautiful bangles but no one cared about them. A deep sadness suddenly overtook the crowd as they all encircled the wagon.

In twenty minutes, the rescue team arrived and they took her to the nearest hospital. After this day no one heard anything about Malika but the girls were worried about her. They talk about her.

BOOM

Miguel
Garcia



The Definition of Coy and Beautiful is a Muslim Women

Michael Gonzalez

You are a gift of Islam
You are the mountain of
Eman,
Only with you my life is in
 harmony,
Only through you I can live more
 pridefully,
The highest step of what modesty means belongs
 To you,
The pleasure of Allah belongs to you!
The way you are dressed makes me
Proud,
The way you smile and wear your hijab
 makes me proud,
A rose like you a desert
I'll give you my hand in the name
 of Allah.
I'll give you my tears as water,
For you to drink
OH! Modest Muslim do not be
Afraid to wear a hijab
For your mind and heart is more sacred than your body
Remember every rose has to protect
 Itself.
I ask you, where do you find diamonds?
Deep down on the earth covered and
 Protected
Where do you find pearls?
Deep down the sea cover up by
 A beautiful shell.
Now, I tell you,
OH, dear Muslim women you are more
 Precious than a rose, a diamond, or
 Pearl
You are my will of fire,
The eyes I so desire



Untitled
Michael Gonzalez

Our last family moment (The pool)

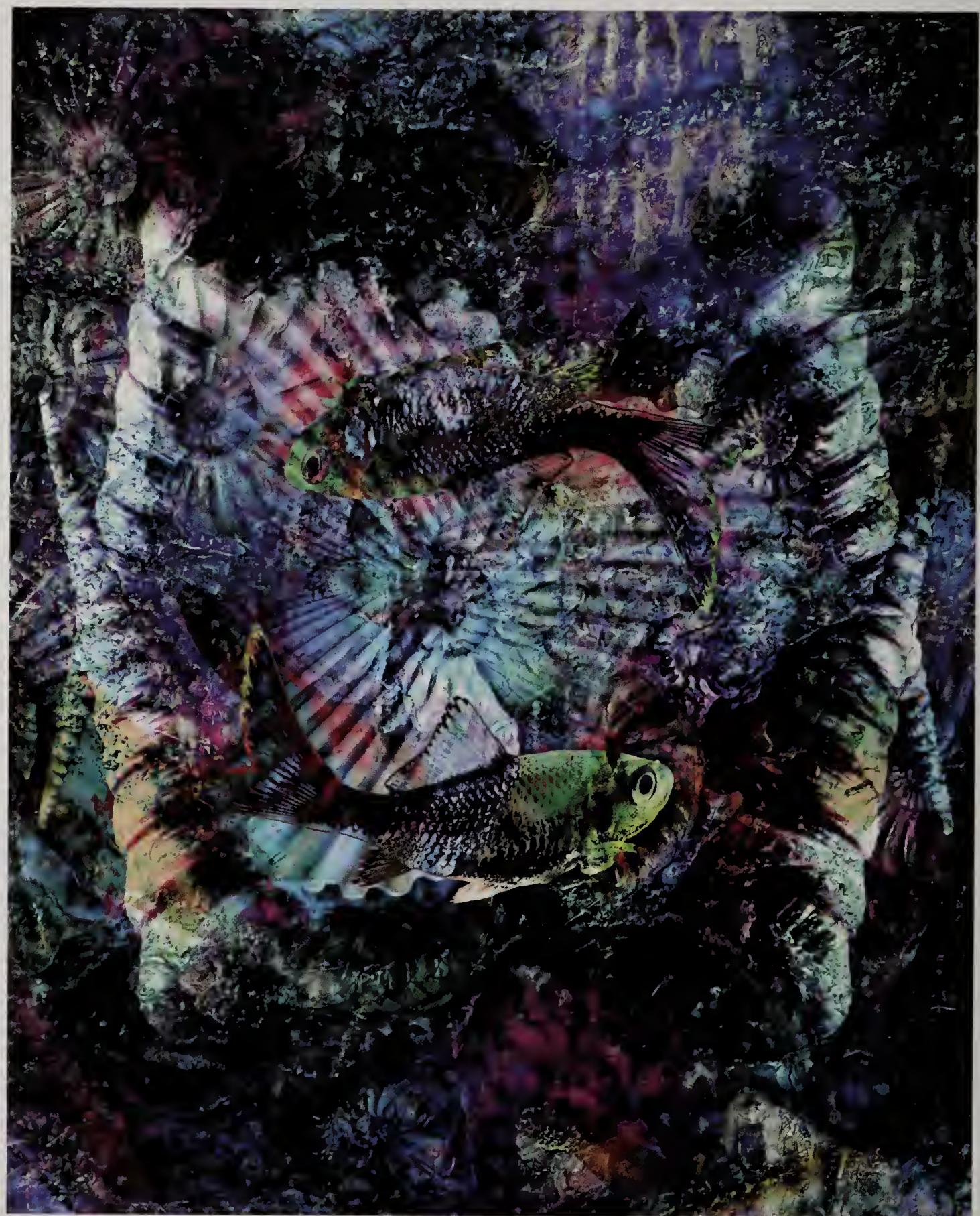
Armando Zamudio

My family and I went to our first public pool. I was very nervous, yet so excited. Our cousins and uncle came as well, but they were a lot older than me. My cousins were more interested in hanging with my two older sisters, who were hanging out at the big kid side of the pool. So, I had nowhere to go but to stand next to my father, who was talking to my uncle. I had my Rugrats swimming trunks on and was holding on to my dad's hand, afraid of leaving his sight. At that moment, my mother was much closer to my sisters, keeping an eye on them to make sure they wouldn't do anything dumb like play who can drown faster. I started to get hot and started to sweat, so sure enough, I wanted to go play with all my cousins and sisters. I tapped my dad's leg and asked, "May I go?" He said, "Okay." I walked alone to the other end of the pool, and I saw my mother and my sisters swimming and having a good time. I wanted to jump in and play as well, but as soon as I was about to go in, I looked at how deep it was and I gulped. I thought maybe going to the other side would be safer. I ended up jumping in alone. I thought, "Hey, this is fun!" I started jumping up and down and tried teaching myself to swim, but as soon as I tried this, a large man pushed me, and then a beach ball hit me in the head. I turned to see who was laughing. I started to realize how many people were in the pool. I see the large man eating nachos and dropping cheese on the pool, a little kid bleeding from his nose and using the water to stop the bleeding, a group of teenagers laughing really loud as one kept making bubbles appear around him, and a little girl coming from underwater as her snot dripped down her nose and into the pool. All of a sudden a dark skin boy bumped into me, "Hey! Move out the way! This is my side." I stare at him for a bit. I was confused about what he meant by "his spot." He then pushed me angrily and started to scream at me. I freaked out, so I started to swim away, but then I bumped into nacho cheese. I screamed from the disgusting sight, and turned away, but bumped into the kid blowing bubbles around me. I turned away quickly. Starting to panic, I put my head down and tried

not to see, but then I saw spots of blood from the kid's bloody nose. The beach ball again hit me in the head, even harder this time. I tried to get out, but the dark skin boy was in the way and pushed me away. The dark skin boy said, "I said, 'This is my spot!'" I looked at where my mom and sister were to see if they noticed that I started to panic and needed help getting out. I saw no one in sight. All I saw were people screaming and splashing the nasty water everywhere. All of the people's sweat dripped down their bodies onto the same water my little body was in. I wanted to get out! I started to realize that I was alone and started to cry. I wanted to go home. The beach ball hit me again. More kids laughed, and then the large man came back pushing me right in the middle of everything. I then forgot what side of the pool I came from. I looked around to see if my dad was there to save me, but all I saw were people eating hotdogs, girls splashing water at boys, the bloody nose kid still playing, and two boys playing Marko Polo. I start to cry, "Pa? Pa? Pa?" I shouted, "Oh my God! My dad left me." All alone, I began to cry out loud. The dark skin boy and his friend's laughed and picked on me because of my tears. The large man laughed at me as well. Everybody started to laugh at me: the bloody nose kid, the teenagers, the girls, the boys, the moms, dads, and children. The pool started to turn a little yellow as a baby's diaper floated by. I screamed, "PA!!!" I panicked and dunked my head under the water. My eyes closed and I held my breath in and heard the sound of water flowing through my ears. "This is it," I thought. "They forgot about me, and I'm going to live under this disgusting pool for the rest of my life." All of a sudden, I felt an arm grab my body, and it started to pull me above the water, so I open my eyes and all I saw was a floating Band-Aid. I reached the top, and the person who was saving me was my dad. He lifted me out of the pool. Holding me, he wrapped a towel around me. When I cried on his shoulders he said, "Sh, sh, its okay son It's going to be okay."

One year later, my parents got a divorce. My mother ran away forever with my two sisters. My father also left, not physically but mentally. He was never the same again. And there I was one year later, still hearing the water flow through my ears, trapped and alone waiting for someone to rescue me.

Pices
Vanessa



Peace

Elizabeth Ventsias

A dove soars high,
Its pure white wings spread wide,
An olive branch hangs from its mouth loosely,
Nearly ready to fall,

Below a land of fire blazes,
Ever its flames lick at the bird's belly,
Blackening the once pristine white to ash,
Burning it to charcoal,

The dove does not rest,
It cannot rest,
For if it does, it will burn wholly,
And the olive branch will be lost,

In a sea of fire it will remain,
Until another white dove will chance the perilous journey,
Grab the charred branch and take flight,
And have its belly blackened by the fire below.

Broken Pieces

danielbecerra

Home was a paltry handful
of geometric fragments
some seductively noble
in their pattern of fracture
one resembling a small scale edifice
remarkable
but ostensible nonetheless
Others sharp and debilitating
like infectious deltas.
The rest obsidian dreams
crumbling by nature
into their own frailty
as the years
weather the mind.



I Will Go Brittany Hans

Clank Teeth

McKinley Morganfield

We push our smiles close together
We cringe and wait for a feel
I stop to stare into your eyes
Sometimes this doesn't feel real
I close my eyes and take a breath
We know where to go, but not why
I lean in close, and tilt my head
As you release a final sigh
We clink like dishes in a sink
Was this some type of cruel prank?
Our happiness clashes in a flash
Why oh why did our teeth clank?



Pele

Kristen Kemp

Life of an Army Wife

Sara Kelsey

Early morning wake up
Just longing for you
Wishing your career
Had more room for two

Mid-day hopes
Of a phone call or text
Remembering that Afghanistan
Causes nothing but stress

Evening dinner
Table set for just one
Thinking of you
As I sit and watch our son

Night time sadness
Sleepless nights and cold sheets
Staring at your picture
Wishing you were next to me



Grotto Brittany Hans

THE CUNNING NATURE OF BRUISES

danielbecerra

such deliberate beauty
and at such cost.
we tend to hurt
in circuits
and years for us
are measured in scars
and remnants
of paystubs
in the pockets
of those who deal in bruises.
Lesions in our minds,
the chiseled records;
fractured love,
the mirrored time.

that time bruises women most severely
is no secret
and i,
burdened with the Cancer
of a previous life
swear in vacant aphorisms;
“i would have held your hand,
and better yet
have killed
the man i had to kill
and felt no trepidation
had i only known
and had i been alive”

alas, dead words mean
nothing
to no one.

tired,
we
a thousand years old
lay down over common ground
and bury all our bones.

The Life Cycle of the Trees

Kara Ponce

The leaves have decided to die

Throwing themselves upon the ground like recalcitrant children
shaking their tangled tresses in rejection of the kisses
pressed upon their heads by the Sun.

No, they would rather wiggle and play with the wind
shedding their clothes and unfazed by their passing nudity.

“I don’t need a jacket,” they say
rushing out to meet the cold.

Yet still they shiver and flush in their nakedness.

But now they are in their second adolescence.

In their infancy they whimpered and whined beneath
the shelter of their mother’s expanse
wordlessly begging to be taken back into her embrace
all chubby face and delicate limbs
pliable beneath Nature’s Will and
soft against the rubber boots of hominid mechanisms,
a sleepy sigh upon the lips of the world,
saplings of non-sustainability,
gargantuans yet to unfurl

In their teenage years they rebelled
and formed chains, wordlessly shouting
take back the land, raising lumbering fists
against the backwoods ways of anthropocentrism,
anarchists whose eyes were opened to all that threatened
to tear their leafy government asunder, a gang of
Jolly Green Giants against the industry
who obstinately adhered to veganism and
planted the roots for the biocentric resistance,
unaware that their exhalations of hot shot assuredness became
the nourishment for so many monsters.

Adulthood brought a false sense of durability.

Mid-life crises—“Am I a leaf or a tree?”—
stone-faced totems with crappy jobs and sagging limbs
fighting against a gravitational pull that they could not see
and dreaming nightly of shiny red corvettes and bodacious babes.
What one would give to be the paneling for such a car!
Or to be sliced and diced into some genius’ dissertation,
to feel the caress of the pen which populates the pages of

some tween's diary, to become a vehicle for words and meaning
and not just some abandoned post, devoid of meaning, out here
in the middle of nowhere, where nobody knows or cares to hear you
fall and the birds are always making homes of your hair without permission

Now senile they click and clacker
their wooden dentures, grimacing against the bitter air
which makes their knees ache and their backs bend,
slowly drumming out their death march to the ground.
Dementia brings an alleviating void
the forgotten fragments more wonderful in their newness.
"I can touch my toes," one says, bowing bow to bottom
in a child-like display of flexibility
forgetting the formidable ferocity of its geriatric age
They laugh as they withdraw from the kisses of the setting Sun,
forsaking the matronly ardor imbued by its thawing lips.
They throw themselves upon the ground like recalcitrant children
carefree and naked as the day they were planted,
Yet still they shiver and flush in their nakedness.



The house of my enemy
Angel Formenti

Heroin Bob

Chris Salgado

The Chicagoland Suburbs, the CLS

no that sounds stupid

i'm never going to say that again

the Suburbs, where everything is the same
the weather sucks, too much

Long, cold winters with sparkling snow

that freezes windows of cars

and home, crack your water pipes

keep you indoors to be lazy and

dull and make almost no human

contact until the weather breaks

but it never feels like that

Short, white-hot summers with a blinding sun

and droughts from time to time

dead grass left in the wake

and the humidity that forces

the uncomfortable hug from your clothes

Then there's everything in between,

the mixture of cold

rainy, moisture ridden air

that causes discomfort in joints,

wearing hoodies and jackets and pants in the fall

but shorts and t-shirts and light clothing in the spring

even though it's the same

Yeah this place sucks

the people definitely suck

Everyone is superficial and wants the same thing

they want to leave this place

I want to leave this place

and this "place" right here

The people here don't give a shit

about you and probably never will

at least that's what I used to think

It's all push and shove here

if you get in someone's way

they fucking shove you down

I used to do that

I don't

not anymore

I pick up

and brush off

and help up
now

You know,

I lived every day of my life
wanting to get out of this
fucking hell hole

until recently

wanting to get out of this town,
this place of shining golden waves of grain
and white picket fences of 50s American Dream
and corn

until recently

You know,

this place fucking sucks
but it's where I grew up
it's my shelter and safety
where I go back to for knowing
and comfort

Yeah this place sucks

but it's home base for me,

it's home.



The Remains Kristen Kemp

Songbirds Aren't Meant for Cages

Heather Smith

When out on a whim is out of the question.
Lungs slowly eroded.
Crush my spirit.
Limitations.

Take this breath.
Watch me gasp.
Apathetic, indifferent, unapologetic.
Your reign is relentless.
Bruise my soul.

Slit my wrists.
With your sharp words.
And watch me bleed out there, on the sidewalk.
Just like a dead dove on the pavement.
With a thousand and one widows weeping.

Yet you sit.
Tearing, searching
With your serrated ego
Do tell, why would you want to keep
This ragged ventriloquist dummy?

Mirror Image

Erica Ruiz

I wake up and start my daily ritual. Shower to scrub away sweat and makeup from last night. Think about everything I need to get accomplished for the day, while not trying to think about myself. Just stuff. I get out of the shower while steam floats around me and the mirror is fogged up. I get dressed. Moisturize my face, anticipating the longest part of my morning routine. I get my things ready for the day, stalling, as I make sure everything I need is in order. I double check just to buy myself time. Finally. I sit down at my vanity. Dread knots itself in my stomach as I slowly look up at the mirror. I look at the person in the mirror. I don't know you and yet you're familiar. I hate you. You're ugly. Marred by imperfections. Angry at your desire to taunt me I slather on concealer, slowly hiding the wretchedness. Creating a wall between who you are and who I am. A base layer to keep you in place. A sweeping powder to lock you in. An angry red swipe to cover your lips and black lines your eyes while the pink accents your eyes and cheeks. Effectively creating a barrier that you cannot escape. No blemishes. My hideous friend is finally gone. Confidence steps in as I look at myself in the mirror looking for any signs of you and not finding you there. I smile, satisfied that you're finally gone. But always weary of your return. I may have the day but you rule the night. I am never completely alone as long as you are near.

THE CLOSING OF THE BEACHES

LJ

On the Drive, on strike, Teachers chant: "Respect".
The Today Day Show reminds us that, a decade-plus-one ago,
the Middle East struck a blow on the eastern cheek of the U.S..

My blonde body, complete with a straw hat and ribbon,
peddles past the boyz owning a corner, and as they part a path they ask,
"Do she knows whose we is?" Both feeling alienated. Who belongs?

I'm not sure based on my diet. No watermelon smiles this year
that melt in my mouth, that's better than candy.
All the sweetness of life has been genetically engineered and
life as I knew it is extinct.

The load of news bagged on one side, the water bottles on the other are
out of balance across the handlebars – so like the world. Yesterday
I watched the garbage men
dump the recycling into the same bin.

Autumn cries with a cold mist on this morning's ride, but summer insists
to tantalize me and the lace of light brushes my arms, caresses my face
as I ride beneath the towering trees.

The beaches are closing; the last of the lawnmower guys lifts his hand
slightly, the corner of his lips bend just a smidgen too as
he passes me, me partnered with my bike, my pen, my paper, writing
down my own Fahrenheit 451.

Heartless2

Gabriella Graham

i remember when i was young
And daddy would say
"You should learn to be more graceful"
But what does that mean anyway

i thought of ballerinas and doves in the sky
But i wouldn't want to be like them
So sweet and subtle in my mind
i was more rough, bold, and blunt
With rapid tongue and a head shunt

Attitude was where i laid my head to rest
Anger was the emotion i would use to get this world off of my chest
And i would walk with stone beneath my feet
i kept my head high because the world was too deep
But i wasn't always like this

i remember the day my world split
The backs were against me
Father too far to hold
Mother resented he
And i became rage

Since then ballerinas and doves were not part of my world
Happiness was more distant
Family became fam
And i needed
ily more
i needed he more

And though daddy was always around
He wasn't always where he needed to be

So excuse me for my anger
it gets the worst of me
And i despise it with a passion
Pray for its banishment

But it's been part of me for so long
That even when i want it gone
it comes knocking
Wipes its feet
And enters a part of me
That you never wished you'd meet

But one day
This will all change

Sooner than later there is sunshine washing up rain
And i pray that my children never see the day
That daddy is labeled weekends

it means everything to me
This is the only thing that i've ever dreamed of

Einstein's Brain is Now an Interactive iPad App

Kara Ponce

How queer to think of examining
a genius' brain like some cauliflower on a plate
"There's an App for that!" they say brilliantly,
holding up an unintelligible, gray Rorschach.
"Only \$9.99! ... Genius not included..."

Here we see the parietal, 15 percent larger!
Like 15% more Pringles in a container,
more enjoyment for you,
more genius for the sliced up phenomenon...
"Specimen" —they call it. "Slices." Like
some absurd microorganism, on exhibit
as the ancestor to all humanity.
That poor man. If only he'd known
his brain would be sliced up like
lunchmeat between glass slide loaves,
What would he have said?

"I'd like to think Einstein would have been excited," says one.
Nobody likes their gray matter aired like so much dirty laundry.
"Too bad there wasn't better technology back then"
I'd rather hope Einstein wasn't an overly modest man.
"It's a beautiful collection to have opened to the public"
Like a mind in a glass house.

"[We're] looking for brain regions where the neurons
are more densely connected than normal," says another.

Can't we settle for normal?

All I can think of is that ridiculous image
in high school of the genius, his hair
billowing wildly, crazily about him,
his tongue extended like a panting dog,
mockingly...
Did the genius foresee this?
It's as if he's mocking us with his
shock of white hair and
elephantine skin.

Again, an image of the man,
riding his bicycle in circles,
joy evident on his face
like the smile of a child...
"LOOK AT MEEEEEEEEE!"

Would this child-like man be afraid of
the knives and probes that hone in on his
brain like so many aliens?

"I am just a man," I imagine he'd say,
"not a god"—as so many people sought to
discover what made him special.

"Perhaps there will be another Einstein," they say
rubbing their hands in anticipation.

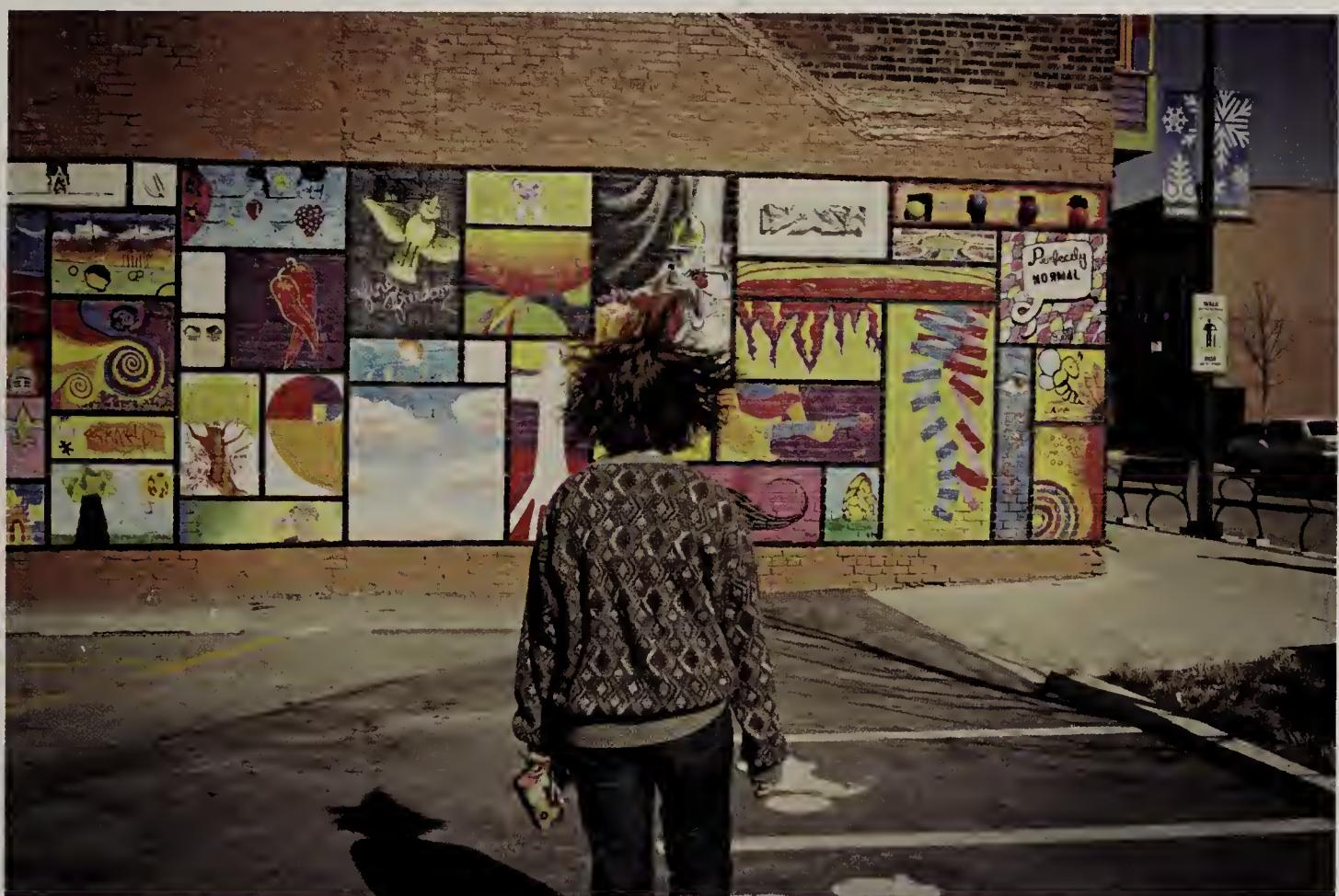
"Brains!" they think.

Like so many cinematic bogeymen.

Wraiths feeding on the essence of a genius.

Slices of Einstein's brain?

There's an App for that.



Follow Me Brittany Hans

Id

by Ego

The images conveyed by the words within that humble book traipsed in upon the cusp of a depressive state, catching the cold hollow and filling it with a modicum of sensation, breathing hot steamy breath upon the virginal ears like whispering demons, speaking to urges gagged and bound by hard won modesty. Their erotic presence acted like a cuckoo clock, popping its ugly head in and out, a dark undulating urge, a wildfire of igniting nerves and sensations against the feeble extinguisher of Catholic teachings and shame. Years spent denying and repressing the latent sexuality inherent to all visceral beings out of fear of black transgressions brought about irreconcilable carnal fantasy, ultimately more convoluted and unruly in its captivity; the secret words were a clarion call in answer to the formidable loneliness and self-loathing of the animal within, triggering the instinct to wrench and tear against its splintering, dinosaur-bone bondage. Finally freed of its inner prison, this feral animal tears its way through the body, its white hot claws shredding and opening sweltering sores which shed savagery directly into the veins like a red plague which coalesces just below the soft lenient flesh of the belly button. Here the aural beast becomes a supernova, its luminosity spreading in waves throughout the body's solar system, stellar fragments moaning one word again and again, Sex Sex Sex, its tantric rhythm threatening to tear the fabrics of the physical universe apart, begging for release—just wanting to feel something, anything more than the acrimonious shuddering brought upon by the drops of rancid tears shed by the soul festering above its bone prison. Blinded by a captivity induced darkness, the beast yearns to see the light, to feel the warmth of Promethean fire upon its cold numbed skin; and like all captive beasts, it will not—cannot—be denied its freedom forever.

midnight mistress

Jonathan Garcia

Images trouble me in my sleep.

I can't sleep anymore.

I cry while masturbating.

She is now truly gone.



don't look at me

Calvin Bonnema

Wordeater #127 & Fall '12 E-Zine Awards

Poetry & Prose

The John Stobart Award for Poetry was established in honor of the founder and guiding light of Wordeater. He retired from JJC's English/World Languages Department in 1999 having sponsored 106 issues.

Cody Markucaitus	\$40	Kara Ponce	\$25
Sam T. Jensen	\$20	daniel becerra	\$10
Kristen Kemp	\$10	Denisse Martinez	\$10
Fakhra Rasheed	\$10	Erica Ruiz	\$10
Chris Salgado	\$10	Kevin Sterne	\$10
Michael Gonzalez	\$5	Heather Smith	\$5
LaKeshia Stigall	\$5	Rhiann VandeBogart	\$5

Visual Arts

Traditional Painting/Drawing:

Something New Cory Bush \$25

Altered Image/Digital:

The Remains Kristen Kemp \$25

Traditional/Straight Photography:

Fall Calls Linda Steger \$25

Jurors

Literature:

John Stobart, Wordeater Founder
Professor, English/World Languages (retired)

Visual Arts:

Eric Gorder
Assistant Professor, Fine Arts



See & hear the multimedia Fall '12 E-Zine

Submission Guidelines

Wordeater is always accepting submissions for its next print and e-zine issues. Wordeater is published in May and December.

Wordeater accepts poetry, prose fiction, creative nonfiction, essays, reviews, art, photography, comics, music, spoken word recordings, short films, and other multi-media for publication consideration.

All written work must be word-processed in Word (.doc) or Rich Text Format (.rtf) and submitted through wordeater@jjc.edu.

All multimedia must be submitted in appropriate formats either through wordeater@jjc.edu or CD/DVD to Adam Heidenreich (C-1063).

All work must be original and unpublished. Artists retain all rights to their own work and may publish it in other media.

Submissions may include a brief "About the Artist" biography (50 words or less), a digital photo, and a link to a web page for promotional purposes. This content will be included if the work is chosen for the e-zine.

Please include a separate cover letter with your name, address, email, phone number, and titles of the work you submit. Please identify yourself as a current student, alumni, or a present or former faculty or staff member. Works will be judged anonymously by the student Editorial Board. There is no limit on the number of submissions, but it is suggested artists submit only a representative collection.

Except for original artwork, submissions will not be returned.

Editorial changes may be made for readability and presentation.

All work must be submitted through wordeater@jjc.edu or sent to Adam J. Heidenreich, Associate Professor of English, Wordeater Advisor (C-1063), in appropriate digital format (CD or DVD) or with instructions for scanning or digital photography.



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